

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1017

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, March 16, 1995

Title: An act relating to emergency management.

Brief Description: Transferring emergency management functions from the department of community development to the military department.

Sponsors: House Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Representatives D. Schmidt, Horn, Robertson, Padden, Lisk, Scott, Dyer, Thompson, Goldsmith, K. Schmidt, Sehlin, Campbell, Sheldon and Talcott).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 3/16/95 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Drew, Hale, McCaslin and Winsley.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: Since World War II, the state's functions relating to emergency management have been organizationally separate from the Military Department. The original structure was the old Civil Defense Department. In 1986, it was merged into the Department of Community Development as the Division of Emergency Management. In 1993, the Legislature merged the Department of Community Development with the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

The new Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development is organized into six core service areas, including: community-based family services; trade and economic sectors; local development assistance; growth management; housing; and public safety. The public safety core service area includes both fire protection and emergency management services.

In approximately half of the states, emergency management functions are administered under the Military Department. It has been reported that during major disasters, such as the 1993 Midwest flooding, this type of administration increases timely response, efficiency, and coordination.

In 1994, the Legislature unanimously passed a measure that transferred administration of the state's comprehensive emergency management program to the Military Department. However, Governor Lowry vetoed the legislation in its entirety.

Summary of Amended Bill: Administration of the state's comprehensive emergency management program is transferred from the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) to the Military Department. All powers and duties, personnel and equipment, rules and pending business are transferred from CTED to the Military Department.

CTED's fire mobilization policy regarding the reimbursement of nonhost fire protection authorities is codified. All nonhost fire protection authorities are eligible for state reimbursement, even if they responded prior to state mobilization under a mutual aid or other interlocal agreement.

The Military Department must develop a strategic plan to enhance coordination and efficiency.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The striking amendment adds a requirement that the Military Department, in cooperation with the Emergency Management Council, develop a strategic plan to enhance coordination and efficiency and decrease costs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1995.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Greg Barlow, Washington National Guard (neutral).